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Speech of Judge Douglas.

Delivered at Cleveland, September 22, 1860.

Mr. Douglas said: Mr. Chairman and fellow-citizens of the Western Reserve, before proceeding with the argument which I have proposed to submit to you, I may be permitted to remark, since your President has referred to the regularity of the nomination at Baltimore, that I would never have suffered the use of my name before the Democratic party unless I had been duly and regularly nominated according to the usage of the party. I am not, however, in the history of the Democratic party, a name which would never permit my name to be used to divide, distract or disturb the harmony of the Democracy, much less would I ever consent to claim a nomination when I was not the choice of a majority of my party. Let me refer to one or two facts on this point. When Franklin Pierce received a majority of the votes of the Democratic party at Baltimore, I sent a message by telegraph which was read in Convention, withdrawing my name before the result was announced. Again, when at Cincinnati James Buchanan received a majority of votes but less than two-thirds of the persons voting, I sent a telegraphic dispatch withdrawing my name and asking my friends to vote for Mr. Buchanan because he had received the vote of a majority of the Democratic party. I never yet suffered my ambition to carry me so far as to desire a nomination when I was not the choice of my party, much less did I ever consider it consistent with my personal honor as a gentleman to go into a convention asking for a nomination, and when I failed to get it, to go on and campaign. [Immense applause.] I have never yet learned of any position in life where it was deemed honorable for a man to take the chances of success and then refuse to take the responsibilities when defeated. [Cheers.] But I shall refrain from saying anything more on this point, for the reason that I daily receive satisfactory evidence that the Democratic party are having fairly and honorably made. [Cries of "That's so!"]

Not only was the nomination regular but the platform of the party upon which I now stand is precisely the same that it has been for the last twelve or sixteen years. I intend showing you that the Democratic party are organized and its platform is pledged to the doctrine of non-interference by Congress with slavery in the Territories. [Applause.] The distinguished feature of the Republicans on the one hand and the Democrats on the other, in 1860, was, that the Republicans claimed that it was the duty of Congress to control the slavery question in the Territories, while the Democrats claimed that slavery should be banished from the halls of Congress and referred to the people, subject only to the Constitution. [That's the talk.] "That's so." Four years ago no man was deemed a Democrat, and no man had the hardihood to claim to be a Democrat who was not opposed to Congressional interference upon the subject of slavery, and even now, so far as the slavery question is concerned, there are but two parties in this country, the one in favor of the non-interference doctrine, and the other in favor of Congressional interference. It is true that the intervention party is subdivided into two factions, the one in favor of Congressional intervention to prohibit slavery wherever the people want it, and the other in favor of Congressional intervention to maintain and protect slavery wherever the people do not want it. [Applause and laughter.] The Republican party demand that Congress shall prohibit slavery wherever the people desire it. They do not wish to have Congress interfere where the people are opposed to it, for the reason that the people will prohibit it themselves through their local legislatures whenever they do not want it. Hence the Republicans are in favor of Congressional intervention to deprive the people of the freedom whenever they desire to have it. On the other hand the Southern secessionists, those who attempted to break up the Democratic party at Charleston and at Baltimore, declare that they are in favor of Congressional intervention to maintain and protect slavery wherever necessary. There are the words, "whenever necessary." When do they deem it necessary for Congress to interfere, for in such cases the people will protect themselves by their local law. Hence the Breckinridge are in favor of Congressional interference, to maintain and protect slavery only where the people do not want it. [That's the talk.]

Indignant Democrat—Three groans for the Breckinridge party.

Mr. Douglas—No there are not enough of them to groan. [Great laughter and applause.] Thus you find that the Republicans of the North and the Secessionists of the South agree in principle. They agree first, that Congress has the power and it is its duty to control the slavery question.

Second, that Congress should always decide that question against the wishes of the people.

Third, in denouncing non-interference and popular sovereignty to which the Democratic party is pledged by its platform and its organization. It is not plain that the Republicans of the North and the Secessionists of the South both insist upon Congressional intervention upon the subject of slavery, and differ only as to the mode which that intervention shall be exercised? [A voice—"Exactly!"]

The Democratic party that, as in former times, stands irreconcilably opposed to both of these intervention factions. Now as heretofore it is pledged to the doctrine of non-interference by Congress in the Territories.

It is true that the Republicans have claimed a title more consistent in their arguments to interfere in the Territories than they have in the habit of asserting for a long series of years that all these northern western States were made free States by the act of Congress known as the ordinance of 1787. They tell you that but for the ordinance of 1787, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan, would all have been slave States, and they are in the habit of meeting and celebrating the 13th of July, the date of the Declaration of Independence. [Laughter.] They have repeated this declaration that you would all have been slave States, instead of free States, but for that ordinance, so often that I have really no doubt that many of them have come to believe it. [Resounded laughter and applause.] What a compliment they pay to your intelligence, to your virtue, to your capacity for self-government when they say that you are not free because you choose to be free, but because Congress would not permit you to be otherwise! [Cries of "That's so!"] I do not know how

many of you feel about this. I have heard that proposition here in Ohio, but I tell you that the people of Illinois hold their free institutions by a higher and a better title than that of Congress. [Voices—"We do not."] We are not the slaves of Congress, and we would not permit our State to be a slave State. [Applause.] The Republicans leaders who talk to you about the ordinance of 1787 ought to know that every one of their statements is contradicted by the history of this country.

"That's so." Let me call your attention to a few facts. Very soon after the constitution of the United States was adopted, the people of Indiana and Illinois Territories applied to Congress to repeal the ordinance of 1787. Congress refused, and thereupon the first Territorial Legislature that ever assembled at Vincennes, proceeded to pass laws interfering with the prohibition and to aid in the establishment of slavery in Indiana and Michigan were slave Territories in pursuance of their own Territorial laws. [That's so!] We in Illinois adopted slavery in defiance of the ordinance of 1787, and we maintained it until experience proved that in our climate with our soil and productions it was not for our good to have it. When we came to the conclusion that the best interests of ourselves and our posterity required us to abolish slavery we abolished it. We did not abolish it because Congress told us to, but on the contrary, so long as Congress said we should not have slavery just so long we did not have it. [Laughter, and a voice—"Human nature, by gracious!"] and we abolished it on the very day that Congress withdrew the prohibition and told us to do as we pleased. [Great laughter.] I have already told you why we abolished it. There was not an abolitionist in Illinois at the time. There was not a free soiler or a modern republican, according to the present phrase in the territory at that day. Nineteenth of all our people were from the slaveholding States, had been nursed by slaves, were familiar with them and had no prejudice against the institution, but experience had taught them that it was not for their good, pecuniarily, morally, politically or in any other way, to have it and they therefore abolished it.

Ohio is a Free State according to the same principle. I do not believe that the people of Ohio would adopt slavery morally because Congress would permit them to do so. [Voices—"I do not believe that there is a free State by compulsion."] [No!] I believe that you are a free State from choice, and hence I have faith that you will maintain your free institutions. But what man is reckless enough to assert now that the people of Ohio have not the power to adopt slavery if they choose it. In such cases as each of the States of this Union your right to form their own laws and to submit themselves, why should we not permit the people of all the territories to exercise the same privilege of self-government? The difficulty is, that in these modern days new notions of faith have been promulgated and new doctrines are being preached.

We are told by Mr. Lincoln, the Republican candidate for the Presidency, that "this government cannot endure half free and half slave, that all these States must become free or else all of them must become slave, otherwise the Union cannot continue to exist." What authority has Mr. Lincoln for announcing such a proposition? Is it not contradicted by the whole history of our country? Has not the Union existed from the day the Constitution was adopted to this very hour, divided into free and slave States? Have we not, while thus divided, progressed in wealth and population and in all the elements of greatness and glory, far beyond any other people on earth. [Yes.] Why, then, can we not today continue to live in peace under the same system, which our fathers made for us? [Yes, we can, we will.] The very declaration of the Republican leaders that this government cannot endure as our fathers made it, shows that they are opposed to the system of government which our ancestors transmitted to us. [Hurrah for Douglas, and three cheers.]

Suppose this new doctrine of uniformity in all the institutions of all the States in the Union had prevailed when the Constitution was adopted, and what would have been the result? Remember that when the Constitution was adopted this Union consisted of thirteen States, twelve of which were slaveholding and only one was a free State. Now suppose that when the Convention assembled in Philadelphia, containing delegates from twelve slaveholding States and from one free State, that the President of the Convention had said, as Lincoln now says, that "a house divided against itself cannot stand, this Union divided against free and slave States cannot endure." The States must all be free or all be slave, otherwise the Union cannot exist." I say, suppose if there be not probability in the supposition, that George Washington had made this declaration when he took his oath as President of the Convention, and that the Convention had acted on it, do you think the one free State would have controlled the twelve slaveholding States and thus have abolished slavery everywhere? [Hit them again!] On the contrary would there not have been danger of the twelve slaveholding States having voted the one free State out of the Convention, and thus have retained slavery by a constitutional provision, very much of American soil? [Yes.]

The fields of freedom when the Constitution was adopted repudiated the doctrine that slavery must exist everywhere or nowhere, and in lieu of it framed the Constitution on the principle that each State should do as it pleased, have slavery as long as it chose and abolish it whenever it desired to do so. The Constitution was framed on the great principle of Popular Sovereignty, the right of the people to make their own laws, establish their own institutions, legislate for themselves and mind their own business, without interfering with their neighbors. [Cheers.] Well, the Constitution has existed more than seventy years on that principle and what reason have the Northern Secessionists of its practical workings? I saw that the Republican and Abolition leaders who go around through the country making speeches at night in school houses are in the habit of talking about the aggression of the slave power. [That's a fact.] They tell you that this slave power is a great monster, is traveling over the country, devouring up everything that it comes in contact with, and that unless you people of Ohio resist yourselves it will make Ohio a slave State. [Laughter.] Let us test this statement by reference to the history of the country.

For many years the people of Ohio, the men, women and children, have lived in peace and comfort with the slave power. Now how much progress has the slave made over the cause of freedom under this doctrine of self-government? I have already told you that the Constitution was adopted there were twelve slaveholding States and only one free State, and now we have a majority of free States in the whole Union. When we began we were only one State out of thirteen and now at the end of seventy-three years we have become the majority. What cause of complaint can a Northern man—a man from a free State make against a Constitution and a system of government which has produced such results? Ah! my friends, I fear that this Republican party have seized hold of this sectional position merely because the North is a majority. So long as we of the free States were in a minority and the slaveholding States were a majority did you hear any Republican crying for a free State? No, Northern party! [No.] So long as we of the North were the minority we claimed the doctrine of non-interference by the federal government. We did not then want to be out-voted, and is it right now, so soon as we have become the majority section under the operation of that principle, to change it, is it fair for us to turn round and exercise the power over the minority which we would not have submitted to when we were the minority? [Cries of "no, no, never!"] It is mainly in us as Northern men to exercise an arbitrary power over our brethren in other States which they "deserve" to exercise over us when they vote and the country will have a right to appeal to you as a majority to stand firmly by this great principle of self-government upon which our institutions were founded. So long as we adhered to it there was no strife in the country.

No man can close his eyes to the fact, that this country now as in 1850 is in imminent peril from sectional parties. You all remember how in 1850 sections of strife were carried to the point that the free States and the slave States were almost at the point of the country being almost for the perpetuity of the Union. Let me inquire what were the causes which put the country in peril then? It was an attempt on the part of the Federal Government to usurp power over the slavery question in the Territories. The Free soilers then demanded that Congress, by the application of the Wilmot Proviso, should prohibit slavery everywhere in the Territories of the United States. They said they would not obey the Missouri Compromise which prohibited slavery in one-half of the Territory and tolerated it in the other half, but they demanded that slavery should be prohibited by Congress South as well as North of the line of 36 deg. 30 min. On the other hand a body of men in the Southern States, after the original adoption of the Missouri Compromise, on my motion by twelve majority of the Senate on my motion by twelve majority, but when it went to the House of Representatives, it was defeated by Northern men with free soil prejudices. [Applause.]

Thus in 1850 we had two parties in existence the same as now, one advocating Northern intervention and the other Southern non-interference, and in favor of prohibiting slavery everywhere the people wanted it and the other in favor of Congress maintaining slavery where the people did not want it. It was these two sectional parties, one appealing to Northern passion and Northern pride, and the other to Southern passion and Southern prejudice that threatened the peace and perpetuity of the Union in 1850. And what were the remedies applied when the country was in peril from this peril? Henry Clay who had performed his earthly duties and had returned to the shades of Ashland there to prepare for another and a better world, in his retreat heard the harsh, discordant sounds of sectional strife and mediated disunion and he came forward from his retreat and resumed his seat in the Senate, that great theater of his great deeds, and by his wisdom and his peace, his wisdom and the renewal of his great name he might do something to restore peace to a distracted country. From the moment that Clay arrived among us in the Senate we recognized him as the leader of all Union men. For eight or nine months, we assembled in Congress every morning with Clay in the chair, Clay in the right hand and Webster in the left and the Union men, whigs and democrats, mingled together, devising measures by which we could put down Northern abolitionism and Southern disunion. You all know the result of these deliberations. Our joint labor produced the compromise measures of 1850, and they rested on the principle of non-interference by Congress with slavery in the Territories. The support of this principle under the guidance of Clay, Webster, Cass and the Union Whigs and Union democrats restored peace and harmony to the country.

Then as now the extreme anti-slavery men of the North united with the extreme pro-slavery men of the South to keep up the agitation and to prevent any just and equitable adjustment of the controversy. Chase and Sumner, and Giddings, and all of that class of politicians then united with Hunter, Mason, Davis, Butler and the Southern fire eaters to defeat non-interference then as they unite now to defeat the same principle.

Enthusiastic individual—They won't do it though.

Mr. Douglas—I trust they cannot do it now. [Cries of "Never!"] Then all Union men, all conservative men, who loved their country more than party united in overthrowing these Northern and Southern agitators and burying them in the same grave. [Cries of "good and bully!"] I trust that there is partition intelligence and virtue enough left among the American people now to undo and account the country to us. [There is! and "good!"] A voice—"Keep away British gold, and we can!"

I presume there are some men within the hearing of my voice who were in the habit of voting the Whig ticket in 1850 and 1852. Are there not? [Voices—"Yes, lots of them!"] If so I would like to address myself to you as men who were in the habit of voting the Whig ticket in 1850 and 1852, and now, Republicans. [A voice—"You can not find any such!"] I rather think I can find them if I remember in those days the Western Reserve used to give just about as many Whig majority as it now gives for the Republicans. [Great laughter.] Now upon what principle is it that an old line Whig in 1850 can be a Republican in 1860? Let me ask you whether in 1850 the Whig party was not pledged by its organization to maintain the doctrine of non-interference by Congress with slavery in the Territories. [Voices—"True!"] When the Whig party assembled in national convention in 1850 and nominated Stephen A. Douglas for President, they adopted resolutions pledging your party to maintain the great principle of non-interference and when the Democratic

party assembled at Baltimore, the same year and nominated Pierce for President we incorporated a resolution in our platform affirming the same principle. How is it that a man who was a Whig in 1850, or a man who was a Democrat that year can now turn Republican and vote for Congressional intervention? What has happened that would justify a violation of their pledge?

Person in the crowd—The repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

Mr. Douglas—I am much obliged to you for that suggestion. I have now a word or two to say about the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. [Great applause.] That gentleman announces that the excuse for an Old-line Whig or Democrat violating his pledge to maintain the doctrine of non-interference in the Territories is the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Let us see whether that gives him a justifiable excuse for changing his principles. [Laughter.] I had much to do with the repeal of the Missouri Compromise then and now, and I am a Missouri Compromise man and a free soil man. [That's so!] I boldly avow it. [Good!] and shoulder all the responsibilities of the act. [Cheers.] There is no act of my whole public life, of which I have a more conscientious pride, than the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

Now for facts. When I came into public life I found the slavery question settled by a geographical line running across the continent, prohibiting slavery north of 36 deg. 30 min. and tolerating it south of that line. All the old Whigs and all the old Democrats were willing to acquiesce in that legislation simply because they found it in the State book, and the country was at peace under it, but the Abolitionists, headed by father Giddings, [laughter.] John P. Hays, Wm. H. Seward and a few others of that stamp demanded the Missouri compromise because they said it was a compromise between freedom and slavery. That if freedom was right North of the line it was right South, if slavery was right South, it was right North, and it was right to let the people do as they pleased on "one side they ought to be allowed to do as they pleased on the other." [Laughter and applause.] That was their argument against the Missouri Compromise, and I never yet saw a man who could answer it. I tried to do it, for my devotion to this Union and to the rights of the people was so great, that I was willing to acquiesce in that legislation rather than disturb the country by molesting it. Hence when we acquired California and New Mexico, from Mexico, I, as chairman of the committee on Territories, offered an amendment to the bill extending the Missouri compromise line West to the Pacific ocean in the same sense and with the same force and vigor as the Missouri Compromise. I originally adopted it, and it was carried to the Senate on my motion by twelve majority, but when it went to the House of Representatives, it was defeated by Northern men with free soil prejudices. [Applause.]

The defeat of the Missouri compromise in 1845, in the manner I have stated, was a great disaster to the Union. It was a great disaster to the Union in 1850. As an ally of the Northern people, they would not submit to that geographical line. All the South asking that time was that we would carry it in good faith the Missouri compromise to the Pacific ocean according to its intent when originally adopted. I tried in good faith to carry it out and abide by it, but I was defeated. I had no vote in the Missouri compromise, not from choice, but because I was voted down, and could not help myself. Then the question arose what should be done to save the country from the peril of this sectional strife kindled in the North by the free-soilers and abolitionists, and in the South by the secessionists and disunionists. I have told you what was done. Clay came back to the Senate and took command of the allied army of Union men and we Democrats rallied around Clay as our leader when the Union was in danger, the same as the old Whigs rallied around Jackson in 1833, when nullification threatened a dissolution of the Union. [A voice—"We will rally together this time!"] All you remember that the South Carolina attempt to break up the country and to nullify the tariff laws, and the Union men, whigs and democrats, mingled together, devising measures by which we could put down Northern abolitionism and Southern disunion. You all know the result of these deliberations. Our joint labor produced the compromise measures of 1850, and they rested on the principle of non-interference by Congress with slavery in the Territories. The support of this principle under the guidance of Clay, Webster, Cass and the Union Whigs and Union democrats restored peace and harmony to the country.

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promise, [A voice—"I am." Great laughter and applause.] Let me remind you again that after the Missouri Compromise line was abolished and the Nebraska bill was passed, by which the slavery question was banished from the halls of Congress and referred to the people of the Territories to do as they pleased, the Democratic party affirmed that doctrine in the Cincinnati Platform in 1856. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill was rendered necessary, in order to carry out the principle of non-interference as adopted in 1850, and if you will look at the 14th section of that bill, the very clause in which the Missouri Compromise was repealed, you will there find stated the reasons for the repeal. Two reasons are assigned. The first is that "the Missouri Compromise being inconsistent with the principle of non-interference by Congress as affirmed in the Cincinnati Platform of 1856, it was inconsistent with the Compromise measure of 1850, to which every Whig and every Democrat in America had become pledged. The second reason assigned was in these words, "It being the true intent and meaning of this act, not to legislate slavery into any State or Territory, nor to exclude it therefrom, but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States." There you find the principle of the Nebraska bill—the principle of Popular Sovereignty—clearly and distinctly defined.

A person on the stand here inquired: "Did you mean to deny by that bill the right of Congress to control slavery in the Territories?"

Mr. Douglas, I am asked from the stand whether I meant to deny the right of Congress to control the slavery question in the Territories. The object of the bill was to banish the subject of slavery from Congress forever and refer it to the people of the Territories to do just as they pleased, to have slavery or not as they chose. [That's right, and applause.] That was the object of the bill, and the object was incorporated into the bill itself. That is the fundamental principle of the Democratic party in opposition to the Republicans of the North and the Secessionists of the South. [Cheers.]

Now my friends, why should not this principle of popular sovereignty be carried out in the Territories of the United States? [Voices—"It should!"] The Republicans claim that it is right in the States of the Union but all wrong in the Territories. [That's the talk.] They say that they have no objections to the people of Ohio regulating the slavery question for themselves. They think that you have sense enough not only to make laws for your own State but also through your representatives in Congress to govern all the Territories. [Laughter and applause.] Now suppose that assumption to be true and would you if you should move to Nebraska territory, be any less capable of governing yourselves after you got there than you were before you started? [Cries of "No."] I find, however, that many of the Republicans in Congress to govern the Territories, would be any less capable of governing the State of Delaware, the State of Florida, or the State of Oregon. Nobody doubts but what the people of these States are capable of self-government. Now if you, being as numerous as the voters in any of these States and being capable of self-government, a home should all move to the Territories, would you be any less capable of governing yourselves after you got there than you were before you started? [Cries of "No."] They then do you not allow the people to govern themselves in a territory as well as in a State?

The Republicans tell you that a State is a sovereign power and that there is no sovereignty in a territory and nothing but sovereignty can make laws and establish institutions. I believe that is their argument. [Laughter.] That argument is not original; with the modern Republicans. It was made many years ago by a very respectable body of old gentlemen known as Tories. [Laughter, applause and cries of "True!"] During the time of the American Revolution the Tories would say that the people of the American colonies were not sovereign powers but a set of miserable squatters and adventurers and hence had no right to govern themselves.

But there was a body of men at that time living in America, headed by such patriots as Washington, and Jefferson, and Franklin, and Hancock, and Adams, who told the British King and the Tories that British subjects in America were entitled to the same rights and privileges as British subjects in England. [Laughter and applause.] They acknowledged the right of parliament to make all laws not affecting the general welfare of the country, without interfering with the domestic concerns of the colonies, just as we Democrats now acknowledge the right of Congress to pass all laws affecting the general welfare of the Republic which do not interfere with the domestic concerns of the people of the States, or the Territories. Remember that the battles of the revolution were all fought in defense of the right of self-government in dependent colonies, in dependent territories, in dependent provinces and not in sovereign States. We only ask therefore that the people of the American Territories shall be permitted to enjoy the same rights and privileges of self-government which our fathers demanded and maintained for the colonies. Why should not an American citizen since the revolution have as many rights as a British subject before that time. If our American citizens since the revolution are not entitled to all the rights of self-government which we claimed before that event, let me ask what have we gained by the sacrifices then made. [Cheers.] I repeat, the Revolution was fought and the victories won in defense of this identical principle of local self-government. "Oh! but," they say, "to permit the people to govern themselves is equivalent to anarchy." [Laughter.] It is very often said to ridiculous doctrine that it is successfully to attack it, and doing the Revolutionary war the Tories were in the habit of representing the pretensions of the American colonies to self-government as "equivalent to anarchy." [Laughter.] They then told us that the people of the American colonies were entitled to no rights, and so principles, except such as were granted to them by the King of England in their charters and asserted that the King could confer the right of self-government and take it away when he pleased. Our fathers told them that they did not derive their right of self-government from the King and he should never take it away. They said they got it from the Great Ruler of the Universe and they would maintain it with their hearts' blood. And they did maintain it. [Cheers.]

Now we find under our constitution a

great political party repeating this same old story and declaring that the people of the Territories have no rights except those Congress grants to them in their charters and inasmuch as Congress confers the rights Congress can take them away. The Democratic party tells these Republicans of the North and Secessionists of the South that American citizens in the Territories did not get their rights from Congress and that Congress cannot and shall not take them away. [Cheers.] An American citizen claims the right of self-government as an inherent right beyond the power of invasion by Congress. [That's true!] If the battles of the Revolution have not established the inherent right of self-government, I ask again what have we gained by the bloody sacrifices of the American patriots?

The Republican leaders endeavor to justify this right of self-government by a confusion of ideas. They want to know whether the first settler who comes on the public lands in violation of law may set up a government of his own against the rights of the government. [Voices—"No!"] The doctrine of popular sovereignty applies to every regularly organized political community under the constitution. Those who go upon the public lands in violation of law, and become trespassers, have no legal rights of self-government until Congress shall legalize their sets and organize them into governments. [Voices—"No!"] Let us take the case of the South Carolina people. Pike's Peak twenty or thirty thousand American citizens engaged in digging gold and establishing homes. That country still belongs to the Indians. The Indian title has never been extinguished, and every man who has gone there has violated the Indian intercourse laws, and has incurred a penalty of a thousand dollars fine and six months imprisonment. What has our government done to enforce the law and protect the Indians against this invasion of the white settlers? It is bound to do one of two things: either to keep the white men out of the country, or to extinguish the Indian title and give them a lawful government under the constitution. Popular sovereignty, therefore, consists in the exercise of the rights of self-government according to the constitution and laws of the land. Squatter sovereignty is where men go in violation of law and set up a government in rebellion against the United States.

A friend has asked me to explain my position upon the Homestead bill. I am a little surprised that I should be called upon to define my position on that subject. For twelve or fourteen years I have devoted more time to the passage of the Homestead bill than any other live man. [Cries of "Good!"] There never has been a Homestead bill before Congress which I have not supported. [Applause.] I introduced one in the House of Representatives the 3rd of March, 1847, and I have since, as a Senator, and I have renewed it year after year in the U.S. Senate. [Cries of "Good!"] When I could not get my own bill I always supported the next best one. [Good, good.] Last year when the House of Representatives passed a Homestead bill and sent it to the Senate, Senator Johnson, of Tennessee, offered a substitute for it, I supported the House bill in preference to his, because I thought it was the best. When I offered an amendment, which I believe to be better even than the House bill, but it failed, and I then voted for the Senate bill. As I thought it was better than nothing. [Applause.] I believe I am in a better position now, for I have been for years, of that line of policy which authorizes every man to go upon the public lands, record his claim, build his house, make his fences, and split his own rails. [Laughter, and when he shall have lived upon it long enough to have established his intention of becoming a permanent settler, give him the title free. [Tremendous applause.] I believe that to be the true policy of the country.

A person in the crowd—How long will he live out?

Mr. Douglas—I hope he will live on it forever. [Cries of "Good!"] and applause.] The Public Lands have not been a proper and legitimate subject of reversion to this government. The country they have tended to disorganize the military affairs of the country. Whenever the country is prosperous, imports are large and money is plenty, every speculator will fill his pockets with cash, go West and buy up the public lands in vast quantities. We then get a revenue of ten, twenty or twenty-five millions of dollars a year into the treasury, from the sale of the Public Land, the very thing we do not want it, because we do not surplus without it, but the moment hard times come, the imports fall, the bank curtail their issues and money is scarce, a dollar's worth of land is sold, and the treasury becomes bankrupt for the want of money. [Sound doctrine.] Hence the land system brings money to the treasury when we do not want it, and when we do want it would change our whole land system and never have another sale of public lands in the world. [Good.] I would apply the preemption law, by which each settler may go and take up his land, build his house and live upon it and cultivate it, and get his title, and I would not let any man get a title who was not an actual settler upon his land. [That's it! and applause.]

I did not intend to refer to this subject, and would not have done so, but for the fact that I have been informed that the small leaders of the Republicans have been representing me as not being in favor of the Homestead bill. [Cries of "That's true," "They have," &c.]

Fellow-citizens, I have really spoken longer than my voice and strength would justify, but a friend here makes a request that I shall say a word upon another subject, and I am very free to say to you that I hold no opinions which I cannot boldly and freely avow everywhere. [Applause.] The only limitation to my answering every question that may be propounded to me, is the want of voice and strength to reply to them. My friend wants to know what I think of the Dred Scott decision. [Laughter.] In the first place, I think it is the final determination of the highest judicial tribunal on earth, and hence binding on every honest man, whether he likes it or dislikes it. [Laughter and applause.] In all free governments there must some judicial tribunal employed to decide in the last resort on all controverted points of law. In this government the Supreme Court of the United States is the tribunal in all cases arising within its jurisdiction. In my opinion the Dred Scott case was fairly within its jurisdiction, and the decision in that case is binding on you and on me, whether we like it or not. [Cheers.] You must either obey the law or you must resort to mob law and Lynch law in opposition to it. In the next place, I think the Court decided right on every point presented in the record. [Cheers.]

The first point presented for the Court's decision was whether or not a negro, descendant of African parents, who were brought to this country and sold as slaves, is a citizen of the United States. [Cries of "No!"] The Court decided that such a negro is not a citizen of the United States and cannot be. I think the Court decided right. [Cries of "Soda!"] [Laughter and applause.] I believe this to be a white man's government. [That's it!]—made by white men for the benefit of white men, and to be administered by white men forever, and by nobody else. [Cathartic applause.] But let us not by any means follow that because a negro is not a citizen that therefore he ought to be a slave. On the contrary I hold that human beings, Christianly and duly require that we should extend to the negro race all the rights, and the privileges, and the responsibilities which they are entitled to as citizens of the United States. [Great applause.] It may be entirely safe and proper here in Ohio, where you have got but a very few negroes, to confer upon them rights and privileges which would be unsafe and dangerous in South Carolina, where the slaves outnumber the free men, and thus to one. [Sound doctrine.] Hence all I have to say to you people in Ohio take care of your own negroes, black and white, [laughter and applause] make your own laws, establish your own institutions, mind your own business and let your neighbors alone. [That's the sensible! and great applause.] Let the people of South Carolina take care of their own negroes, regulate their own institutions, mind their own business and do not interfere with their neighbors. [Cheers.] Now if you will only act on that principle there will be peace and harmony all over this country. [That's so!"]

But these Republicans tell you that slavery is wrong, that it is a great crime, even more ruinous to the white man than to the negro, and therefore it must be put down at all hazards everywhere. My answer to that proposition is this, that in every free country the people must be permitted to determine for themselves what institutions are right and what are wrong. The right to decide whether a law is wise or unwise, whether an institution is just or unjust, is a fundamental principle of self-government of the world over. The tyrant and despots of free government always resort to this same argument that you must not allow the people to decide for themselves for fear they will make bad laws. [Laughter and applause.] Ask the Emperor of Austria why he does not allow his German subjects to have a voice in making the laws under which they live and he would tell you he would be glad to do so but for the fact that the people would ruin themselves by them. If he only gave them the chance. [Laughter and applause.] Go down into Naples and if you find him inquire of that fugitive Bourbon why he did not allow his Italian subjects to have a voice in making the laws under which they live and he would tell you he would be glad to do so but for the fact that the people would ruin themselves by them. If he only gave them the chance. [Laughter and applause.] Go down into Ireland and if you find him inquire of that fugitive Bourbon why he did not allow his Irish subjects to have a voice in making the laws under which they live and he would tell you he would be glad to do so but for the fact that the people would ruin themselves by them. If he only gave them the chance. [Laughter and applause.]

My friends, I have never before this day in my life said a word of strength or power. There are other eloquent gentlemen here present who will talk to you to your hearts content. [Cries of "Good!"] They are sound, reliable and able Democrats, and all you have to do is to call upon them for their young man, and you will have a knowledge and a fullness of showing it. [Laughter.] I will conclude by returning to you my sincere thanks for the courtesy and attention with which you have listened to me. I shall never forget this visit to Cleveland. The most generous and brilliant reception ever given to any man in America I received last night. [You deserved it! and applause.] I have never addressed a more attentive and intelligent audience than this day. Cleveland has many attractions for me. This spot is familiar. Twenty-seven years ago I was studying law in a little office fronting on this very square. I then formed my acquaintances here that ripened into friendships and have never been severed. I take a pride in the monument which I now see, gracing and adorning this beautiful spot. [Great clapping of hands.] You in Cleveland may feel that you have a more immediate interest in that Monument than we in Illinois or the people of the other States of the Union, but the fame of PEARCE belongs to his whole country. He stands prominent among those great heroes of which a nation may be proud, and can the time ever come when his fame shall be partitioned out and so much allotted to Ohio, so much to Rhode Island, and so much to each of the other States. [Cries of "Never!"] No! this country is rich in the achievements of her great men. Every battle field of the revolution, every battle field of the war, every spot of earth which has been a scene of our nation's glory and our nation's shame, and increased the glory of our country in the eyes of the world. [Cheers.] May this Union be preserved in peace and harmony, and may our honor be cherished and transmitted unimpaired and unimpaired to our latest posterity, is the sincere prayer of your obedient servant.

Dr. St. Louis Republican says: "A friend who is well posted, writes that the Breckinridge men in Illinois are fast falling into line with the Democracy, to beat Lincoln, and that probably not more than 1500, if so many, in the whole State, will bolt."

Dr. A correspondent writes to the St. Charles Democrat, Clarion, from Pike County, Ill., that in that place the Douglas Club number forty seven members while the town in '50 only seven Democratic votes.